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June 17, 2003

*Amita J. Halo*  
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants : Gilbert M. Aust et al.  
Serial No. : 09/707,445  
Filing Date : November 6, 2000  
For : SURGICAL INSTRUMENT  
Group Art Unit : 3731  
Examiner : Michael H. Thaler  
Attorney Docket No. : A31-2047RE

**BOX AF**

Commissioner for Patents  
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AMENDMENT AFTER FINAL REJECTION

Introductory Comments

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated April 24, 2003,  
please reconsider the above-identified application in view of  
the following amendment.

STATUS OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1, 2, and 4 have been allowed.

Claims 8 and 9 have been canceled.

Claims 3, 5-7, 10, and 11 stand rejected.